November 2023 | Volume I | Issue VIII | www.jonaraja.com

Pavak

Jonaraja Institute of
Genocide & Attrocities Studies

MEMORIALIZATION

A Necessary Imperative

अपथ्याशीवबालःसामन्तसहितस्ततः।
जनानाम जातिविध्वंसे सूहभट्टः कृतोद्यमः।

- Pandit Jonaraja, Father of Genocide Studies

Pandit Jonaraja, the author of second Rajtarangini that follows the Rajtarangini of Kalhan, was a Kashmiri Shaivite Bhatta Brahmin. His real name was Jyotsanakar, meaning the creator of moonlight. This poetic name was true to his being. He was an exceptional and sensitive poet, well versed in history, astrology, Ayurveda, Yoga and subtler aspects of all these disciplines. He was a renowned Sanskrit scholar. His year of birth as per the records available is estimated as 1389-90.

Like Kalhan he has written the history of Kashmir in poetry. That is not all there is about him. He has recorded the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in detail and delineated its aspects like the present day genocide scholars.

Jati Vidhwans—this is the word Jonaraja has coined to describe genocide. He has defined genocide and his definition almost mirrors the definition given by Raphael Lemkin. He has even pointed out the special intent that motivates the perpetrator and given a very sensitive and vivid account of how an ideology radicalises a regime and effects a total change in its mode of operation that leads to genocide. He has made it clear that the mind of a perpetrator is at a very low level of maturity. That is the view held by present day genocide scholars also. He has defined genocide and his definition is almost equal to the definition given by Raphael Lemkin. His account of the first exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, if placed in correct context, is no different from the atrocities the community faced in 1990.

Roots of the field of genocide studies are found in Pandit Jonaraja. He in every sense is "**Father of Genocide Studies**."

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PAVAK | Volume 1, Issue 8

Editor-in-Chief:
Sunanda Vashisht

Publication Owner
Jonaraja Institute of Genocide & Atrocities Studies

Design
Jonaraja Institute of Genocide & Atrocities Studies

Phone
+91-99062-87277

Website
www.jonaraja.com

Instagram
jigas_india

Remembering and Forgetting- What is Collective Memory of Genocide?

Memory is vital for educating future generations about the Holocaust and other genocides.

Sunanda Vashisht
Editor-in-Chief, Pavak

As the Israel-Hamas war rages yet again the Middle East, it is impossible not to think about tiny Jewish community that has already gone through the horrors of the Holocaust. The Israeli hostages taken by Hamas include some holocaust survivors as well along with adult women, men and children. As a student of genocide studies, I keep wondering what must be going on in the minds of holocaust victims. Had they forgotten holocaust and has the new horror triggered old memories? Or did the old memories never leave them. For Genocide survivors, memories are private hell that they carry along everywhere. In this edition of Pavak we discuss the role of memory in understanding and studying genocide. Memory serves as a foundation for justice, education, and remembrance in the context of genocides. It ensures that the world does not forget the horrors of the past and works towards preventing similar atrocities in the future.

Memory plays a crucial role in the pursuit of justice for genocide. Memory serves several functions in this context, including bearing witness to the atrocities, preserving historical truth, and ensuring that future generations learn from the past to prevent such events from happening again. The loss of memory regarding genocides can have profound and detrimental effects on society and its ability to prevent similar atrocities in the future.

Collective memory refers to the shared memories, experiences, and interpretations of a group or society. In the context of genocide, collective memory refers to how societies remember, understand, and commemorate the genocide as a collective, rather than as individual memories. It encompasses the narratives, symbols, rituals, and commemorations that a society uses to preserve and transmit the memory of the genocide to future generations. Collective memory of genocide is essential because it shapes the identity and consciousness of a society. It influences how societies view themselves, their history, and their relationships with other communities.

Memory helps in documentation of genocide crimes. Memory, often in the form of survivor testimonies, photographs, and written accounts, helps document the crimes committed during genocides. In the case of the Holocaust, survivors' testimonies have been instrumental in understanding the extent of the atrocities, such as those collected by organizations like the USC Shoah Foundation and many others. When societies forget or deny the occurrence of past genocides, there is a risk of historical amnesia. This lack of awareness erases the lessons learned from the past, making it easier for similar patterns of discrimination, prejudice, and violence to re-emerge in the future. Understanding historical genocides is crucial for recognizing early warning signs and preventing their recurrence. Memory loss can lead to a lack of accountability for past crimes. Without a collective memory of the atrocities committed, there may be insufficient public pressure to hold perpetrators accountable. This can result in a culture of impunity, where individuals and groups feel they can commit heinous acts without facing consequences.

Memory serves as a crucial source of evidence in legal proceedings against individuals accused of participating in genocidal activities. Eyewitness accounts and survivor testimonies have been used in various international and national courts to prosecute individuals responsible for the Holocaust. For instance, during the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, survivor testimonies were presented as evidence against Nazi war criminals. Memory loss can lead to a lack of accountability for past crimes. Without a collective memory of the atrocities committed, there may be insufficient public pressure to hold perpetrators accountable. This can result in a culture of impunity, where individuals and groups feel they can commit heinous acts without facing consequences.

Memory is vital for educating future generations about the Holocaust and other genocides. Holocaust museums, memorial sites, and educational programs around the world preserve the memory of the Holocaust, ensuring that the knowledge of these events is passed down to younger generations. Yad Vashem in Israel and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., are examples of institutions dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust. Physical memorials, monuments, museums, and annual commemorations serve as tangible expressions of collective memory. They provide spaces for people to gather, remember the victims, and reflect on the atrocities committed during the genocide. When memory is lost, the wounds of the past remain unaddressed, hindering the possibility of reconciliation and perpetuating intergenerational trauma.

Memory helps counteract Holocaust denial and revisionism. By preserving historical records, testimonies, and artifacts, the memory of the Holocaust stands as a powerful response to those who attempt to deny or distort the reality of the genocide. Efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust, such as the digitization of archives and oral history projects, continue to combat denial and misinformation. The loss of memory means that societies are more likely to repeat the same mistakes. Genocides often occur due to deep-seated prejudices, discrimination, and scapegoating. If the memory of past genocides fades, societies are at a higher risk of falling back into these patterns of behavior, leading to the marginalization and persecution of certain groups.

Memory plays a central role in commemorating the victims of the Holocaust. Anniversaries, memorial events, and commemorations serve as reminders of the atrocities and honor the millions of lives lost. For example, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, observed annually on January 27th, marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and serves as a Global Day of Commemoration.

Memory loss can lead to a diminished sense of empathy. Understanding the personal stories and suffering of genocide victims often fosters empathy and compassion. When these stories are forgotten, it becomes harder for people to relate to the experiences of others, making it easier to ignore or trivialize the plight of marginalized communities. Memory of past genocides informs policies and initiatives aimed at preventing future atrocities. Without this memory, efforts to prevent genocide, such as early warning systems, human rights education, and international interventions, may be insufficient or ineffective.

Memory is deeply intertwined with genocide, playing a vital role in justice, education, prevention, reconciliation, and countering denial. Preserving and honoring the memory of genocides are essential steps toward creating a more just and compassionate world.

In this edition of Pavak, we present scholarly articles which emphasize on what memory means to a genocide survivor. From Holocaust to Kashmiri Pandit Genocide we explain why we must memorialize genocide. We hope you will enjoy this edition as much as you enjoyed our previous editions. As always, we look forward to your feedback.

Collective memory refers to the shared memories, experiences, and interpretations of a group or society. In the context of genocide, collective memory refers to how societies remember, understand, and commemorate the genocide as a collective, rather than as individual memories.

Memorializing Genocide: Preserving the Memory of Tragedy and Resilience

The Holocaust, a cataclysmic watershed in human history, marked a seminal shift in the discourse surrounding justice, wresting control of the narrative from bureaucratic machinations and vested interests and placing it in the hands of those who bore the brunt of its brutality.

Tito Ganju
Chairman, JIGAS

Regrettably, within the domain of conflict, the regulations and agreements governing warfare, delineating the parameters of engagement, are insufficient to contain the malevolent conflagration ignited by the abominable specter of genocide. Unlike conventional warfare, the pernicious implications of genocide permeate the communal psyche, fostering an insidious animosity that defies reconciliation and disrupts the fabric of societal harmony. Peace, within this paradigm, becomes an elusive notion, devoid of the customary channels of negotiation and arbitration.

The international community, represented prominently by Western powers and the United Nations, has grappled with its failure to preempt the egregious offenses against humanity, such as genocides, despite the existence of the binding Genocide Convention of 1948. This failure resonates as an indictment of our collective commitment to justice and the preservation of human dignity.

Present-day instances of ruthless subjugation, notably typified by the plight of the Kashmiri Pandits, serve as stark reminders of the relentless persecution endured by marginalized communities worldwide. The narratives of these victims must be recounted with utmost veneration, imbuing their stories with the dignity and compassion that were ruthlessly stripped away by their oppressors.

For the Genocide Convention to truly uphold its sanctity, fundamental reforms are imperative, necessitating an extensive overhaul of legal frameworks and the unwavering prosecution of crimes against humanity. The commemoration of genocides should transcend mere historical documentation; it should foster an environment of remembrance and homage, allowing the victims to reclaim their narratives and reconstruct their fractured identities.

The Holocaust, a cataclysmic watershed in human history, marked a seminal shift in the discourse surrounding justice, wresting control of the narrative from bureaucratic machinations and vested interests and placing it in the hands of those who bore the brunt of its brutality. Its legacy stands as an indelible testament to the potency of memory in preserving truth, facilitating collective mourning, and healing the collective wounds of humanity. To pay homage to the victims of genocide is not merely to resurrect the specters of the past but to pledge an unwavering dedication to a future where the flames of hatred are extinguished, and the sanctity of life reigns supreme.

Genocide, characterized by the deliberate and systematic annihilation of specific groups based on ethnicity, religion, or nationality, represents one of the most egregious transgressions against humanity. The repercussions of such atrocities transcend the immediate victims, leaving an enduring imprint on the collective memory of society. It is imperative not only to recollect and memorialize these tragic events but also to actively strive to comprehend their origins and implications.

I recently had the profound opportunity to visit the Bosnian Genocide Museum in Sarajevo, an experience that significantly deepened my appreciation of the importance of preserving the memory of genocide.It drove my attention into the necessity of genocide memorialization, drawing inspiration from other memorial sites worldwide, while also shedding light on the tragic Kashmiri Pandit genocide.

Genocide stands as an egregious violation of human rights, often characterized by mass killings, forced displacement, and the destruction of cultural heritage. Its impact on survivors and their communities transcends generations, leaving an enduring legacy of trauma and collective sorrow. The Bosnian Genocide, which unfolded during the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, exemplified the brutal nature of such atrocities. The Bosnian Genocide Museum in Sarajevo serves as a poignant reminder of the suffering endured during this bleak period in history, commemorating the lives lost and honoring the resilience of the survivors.

Reflecting on my visit to the Bosnian Genocide Museum, the exhibits and testimonies presented within its walls provided a vivid depiction of the atrocities committed during the genocide. The museum's meticulously curated displays shed light on personal stories of loss, survival, and perseverance, underscoring the critical nature of preserving the memory of these tragic events. As I traversed its solemn halls, I was struck by the profound empathy and solemn introspection that saturated the space, emphasizing the pivotal role of genocide memorialization in upholding truth and fostering collective remembrance.

Beyond the Bosnian Genocide Museum, numerous other memorial sites across the globe stand as powerful testaments to the imperative nature of preserving the memory of genocide. The Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, for instance, serves as a haunting reminder of the six million Jewish lives lost during the Holocaust. Its architectural symbolism and immersive exhibits create an emotive journey, underscoring the importance of never forgetting the atrocities committed during this dark chapter in history. Similarly, the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda stands as a testament to the victims of the 1994 genocide, nurturing a culture of remembrance, reparation, and unity in the aftermath of a devastating conflict.

While these well-documented genocides have garnered significant attention and commemoration, it is essential to bring to light other tragedies that have often been overshadowed in the annals of history. The genocide of the Kashmiri Pandits, a Hindu minority community in the Kashmir Valley during the late 1980s and early 1990s, represents one such tragic chapter. The genocide and forced displacement faced by the Kashmiri Pandits resulted in a mass exodus, leaving behind a community grappling with the loss of their homes, cultural heritage, and sense of belonging.

The imperative nature of acknowledging and memorializing the genocide of the Kashmiri Pandits lies not only in honouring the memory of the victims but also in recognizing the enduring impact of such atrocities on the community's identity and collective consciousness. By shedding light on the experiences of the Kashmiri Pandits, we not only provide a platform for their voices to be heard but also emphasize the significance of preserving historical truth and advocating for justice and reparations.

As I walked through the poignant halls of the Bosnian Genocide Museum in Sarajevo, I was immediately enveloped

Genocide, characterized by the deliberate and systematic annihilation of specific groups based on ethnicity, religion, or nationality, represents one of the most egregious transgressions against humanity. The repercussions of such atrocities transcend the immediate victims, leaving an enduring imprint on the collective memory of society. **It is imperative not only to recollect and memorialize these tragic events but also to actively strive to comprehend their origins and implications.**

in a sombre atmosphere reverberating with the weight of the tragic events that had unfolded in this region. The museum's carefully curated exhibitions, meticulously designed and emotionally charged, acted as windows into the harrowing experiences of the survivors. Each display stood as a poignant reminder of the immeasurable human suffering endured during the Bosnian Genocide, serving as a testament to the unfathomable atrocities that had scarred this nation's history.

The museum's exhibits bore witness to pain and resilience, interwoven with personal stories of loss, survival, and unwavering determination. Through poignant photographs, artifacts, and testimonies, the museum painted a vivid and heartrending portrayal of the terror and devastation inflicted upon the Bosniak population. The images captured moments of unspeakable horror, while the artifacts bore silent testament to the shattered lives and fractured communities left in the wake of the genocide.

One particular display highlighted the vestiges of a once-thriving community, now reduced to remnants and echoes. Personal belongings, everyday items, and cherished mementos lay frozen in time, their silent testimony serving as a stark reminder of the vibrant lives abruptly cut short. These poignant artifacts, infused with the narratives of their owners, echoed the irreparable loss and shattered dreams of a community torn apart by unfathomable hatred and violence.

The testimonies of survivors, conveyed through audio recordings and written accounts, offered an intimate insight into the profound anguish and enduring resilience of those who had lived through the horrors of the genocide. Their accounts, etched with the indelible marks of suffering and trauma, underscored the imperative need for the world never to forget the crimes committed during this dark chapter in Bosnia's history. Their voices resonated as a poignant plea for remembrance, justice, and the unequivocal condemnation of all forms of intolerance and bigotry.

One of the most emotionally charged sections of the museum was dedicated to honoring the memories of the countless lives lost during the genocide. The memorial wall, adorned with photographs and names of the victims, stood as a solemn tribute to the innocent souls whose lives were mercilessly taken. Each name etched on the wall represented not just an individual but a profound loss experienced by families, friends, and an entire community left to grapple with the staggering consequences of senseless violence and hatred.

The collective impact of the museum's exhibitions was profound, evoking a profound sense of empathy and sorrow within me. As I navigated through the displays, I found myself grappling with the sheer magnitude of human suffering and the enduring resilience of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable adversity. The museum's meticulously crafted narrative served as a powerful catalyst for reflection, compelling visitors to confront the stark realities of genocide and the urgent need to ensure that the memory of the Bosnian Genocide remains embedded in our collective consciousness as a poignant reminder of the repercussions of unbridled hatred and intolerance.

Similarly, the Kashmiri Pandit community has endured an extensive chronicle of persecution and violence within the tumultuous confines of the Kashmir Valley. In their steadfast commitment to preserving their historical narrative and commemorating the profound injustices endured, the community has diligently observed pivotal dates, namely the Holocaust Month, Holocaust Day, Martyrs Day, and Homeland Day. These dates serve as poignant beacons, effectively reminding the community of their unwavering fortitude and providing a crucial platform for collective introspection and remembrance. Notably, the integration of these pivotal dates into the Jantri, the annual almanac, serves as a profound testament to the resolute dedication of Panun Kashmir in upholding the memory of the Kashmiri Pandit genocide.

The gravity of the commemorative months and days is meticulously emphasized within the community's ethos. The observance of the Holocaust Month, spanning the temporal expanse of the entire month of January, serves as a designated period for the meticulous contemplation of the grievous atrocities endured by the Kashmiri Pandit community. During this dedicated timeframe, the community solemnly commemorates the myriad lives lost and reaffirms their steadfast dedication to upholding their intrinsic cultural identity and heritage. The poignant significance of the Holocaust Day, meticulously marked on the 19th of January, stands as an indelible reminder of the tragic initiation of the community's coerced exodus in 1990, effectively highlighting the enduring trauma endured by the Kashmiri Pandit community. Simultaneously, the observance of Martyrs Day and Homeland Day serves as a resolute affirmation of the community's collective memory, reverently honoring the profound sacrifices of those who succumbed and celebrating the enduring resilience of those who have withstood the formidable aftermath of the genocide.

The Jantri, meticulously curated as an annual compendium for centuries, serves as a poignant embodiment of the unwavering commitment of the Kashmiri Pandit community to the process of memorialization. By seamlessly integrating the commemoration of the Holocaust Month, Holocaust Day, Martyrs Day, and Homeland Day into the Jantri, Panun Kashmir has astutely institutionalized the memory of the genocide, diligently ensuring the perpetual preservation and dissemination of the history and tribulations of the community for future generations. The Jantri, functioning as a repository of the community's collective memory, stands as a resounding testament to their enduring resilience and steadfast cultural identity.

The assimilation of these significant dates within the Jantri effectively epitomizes a steadfast commitment to perpetuating the narrative of perseverance and fortitude in the face of adversity. Through the deliberate commemoration of the Holocaust Month, Holocaust Day, Martyrs Day, and Homeland Day, the Kashmiri Pandit community boldly asserts their unwavering determination to honor the memory of those who have endured suffering and sacrifice. Panun Kashmir's resolute dedication to ensuring the seamless integration of these dates within the Jantri notably underscores the pivotal role of the organization in safeguarding the rich cultural heritage and collective memory of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

The commemoration of these significant dates effectively serves as a pivotal instrument not only for the preservation of historical legacies but also for the cultivation of a culture steeped in remembrance and advocacy. By diligently ensuring the continuous remembrance of the genocide, the Kashmiri Pandit community and Panun Kashmir effectively convey a resounding message to the global community, staunchly advocating for justice and underscoring the profound importance of acknowledging historical atrocities. Through the medium of the Jantri, the community persistently continues its advocacy for the recognition of their struggles, effectively serving as a guiding beacon of hope for successive generations, resolutely underscoring the profound significance of upholding the enduring values of resilience, justice, and human dignity.

(Editor's note: Mr. Ganju has shared with Pavak photographs from his visit to the Bosnian Genocide Museum. We reproduce them in the last few pages of this newsletter)

The Kashmiri Pandit community has endured an extensive chronicle of persecution and violence within the tumultuous confines of the Kashmir Valley. In their steadfast commitment to preserving their historical narrative and commemorating the profound injustices endured, the community has diligently observed pivotal dates, namely the Holocaust Month, Holocaust Day, Martyrs Day, and Homeland Day.

Genocide, Memory and Memoryscapes in Kashmir

Traumatic memories, despite all attempts to suppress them, emerge and re-emerge, thus giving rise to many periods of pain for the victim community and embarrassment to the governments, whose attempts to suppress the memories have failed because they were bound to fail.

Dr. Dileep Kumar Kaul
Director, JIGAS

The lived life of every individual, community or a nation is sustained through process of selective remembering and forgetting of the elements of history. Some memories are preferred over others, some are totally eliminated from the sphere of social consciousness. For example the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi is a national holiday but the birthday of Bhagat Singh is not. 14 September is the Balidan Divas or Martyrdom Day for Kashmiri Pandits because on this day in 1989 Pandit Tika Lal Tapiloo, the first genocidal killing of a Kashmiri Pandit was done in the most recent genocide perpetrated on Kashmiri Pandits. But this day holds no importance for the larger Hindu community of India, nor is it significant for the state of India. The same genocidal incident may be interpreted differently by the state and other communities and may have more or less significance for them. But traumatic memories, despite all attempts to suppress them, emerge and re-emerge, thus giving rise to many periods of pain for the victim community and embarrassment to the governments, whose attempts to suppress the memories have failed because they were bound to fail.

Books are the most common instruments of memorialization of genocidal events. Through the testimonies of victims of genocide, they historicize and memorialize the genocidal incidents. Such books may be uncomfortable for the governments and they through the intellectuals may use a historian of one period to over mask another period of history depicted by another historian. In Kashmir Kalhan whose greatness as a historian cannot be doubted, was used to overshadow Jonaraja who continued writing of Rajatarngini after Kalhana. This was because Jonaraja has depicted with sensitivity the beginning of genocide of Kashmiri Pandits. But Jonaraja was never promoted. It becomes clear that among intellectual and political circles of India books that hold, reinforce and retain memories are used to suppress and background memories that may be embarrassing for those in power.

Power may be acquired through democratic or non-democratic means. Invaders come and among the first things they do is renaming the places they invade. This change of names is as per the national pattern of the invader. Raphael Lemkin, the pioneer of genocide studies in modern times, points out two phases of genocide: the destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group and the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. Renaming of places destroys the national pattern of the victim through the imposition of the national pattern of the perpetrator. Renaming erases all memories and the history associated with the previous name of the place.

In Kashmir the historical city of Srinagar is now known as Shahr-e-Khas. The ancientness of Srinagar stands erased. It was the city built by King Pravarsen in 6 CE. But that ancientness stands erased by the phrase Shahr-e-Khas. But that is not all what stands erased by the word from an invading culture. The memory of the whole lived life of the place is eroded by the name change, the interactional past of the place is erased from the memory by changing the name. This consciousness past gave a sense of belonging to those victims who were forced to flee their homes by the perpetrators. This sense of belonging, the sense of possession of a place by its aborigines, and the loss of this possession is integral to the memories of genocide that the victim community carries with it.

American sociologist Sarah D. Warren has done significant work on name changes of places and their effects on people and communities. Her work on Mapuche, the indigenous people of Argentina is significant in this respect. She has given the example of General Roca, the town in the province of Rio-Negro in Argentina. General Julio Roca is held in highest esteem in Argentina as a great General who strengthened Argentina through the conquest of the desert area. But that conquest had caused genocide of the indigenous people living in that area. These indigenous people are called Mapuche whose existence dates back to 500-600 BCE. General Roca is a glorious name for Argentina as a nation, but for Mapuche community it signifies displacement, genocide and dispossession. They have an alternative memory of the conquest though that may be a matter of glory for Argentina as a nation.

The situation for Mapuche people changed when the name of the town was changed to Fiske Menuko which is a Mapuche name that means “deep water.” The name of the town changed its meaning from that of an invader to an ecological entity. It was more than a change of meaning. The name “General Roca” had normalized and glorified the phenomenon of dispossession of the place enforced on indigenous Mapuche people by the conquest. The name underlines what was lost along with what still remains of Mapuche, the indigenous people. The name Fiske Menuko meaning deep waters shows what the people had lost. They had lost their connection with their ecology (Deep water), their ecological culture and language. The renaming restored those connections and represented the fact that Mapuche people still live in the place and these people cannot be annihilated by any conquest or cultural genocide. The perpetrators and the victims have different memories of the same genocidal event.

Seen in this perspective the name-change campaign of cities and places in India has a different story to tell. In the month of February this year, Supreme Court of India dismissed a petition by a political leader Ashwini Upadhyay. This petition sought to rename historical places, which he said had been named after “foreign barbaric invaders.” Dismissing the petition, justice KM Joseph remarked that the petitioner was pointing fingers at a particular community terming it barbaric. Justice Joseph said that India is a secular country and asked the

Power may be acquired through democratic or non-democratic means. Invaders come and among the first things they do is renaming the places they invade. This change of names is as per the national pattern of the invader. Raphael Lemkin, the pioneer of genocide studies in modern times, points out two phases of genocide: the destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group and the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. Renaming of places destroys the national pattern of the victim through the imposition of the national pattern of the perpetrator.

question, " Do you want to keep the country on the boil?"
Whatever may be the political reasons behind filing this petition, it brought forth the fact that there are people in this country who have alternative memories associated with the name change of the places. They remember the name change with the invaders whom they call barbaric. When an invader comes and changes the names of places, he erases the memories associated with the original names of the places and imposes his own nomenclature so that only his memories survive. The renaming of the place establishes the power of the person who gives the new name and memorializes him. In the process the original inhabitants have to suffer the dispossession of the place to which they belong and which belongs to them.
The remark by justice Joseph implies that such renaming cannot be tolerated in a secular country like India because this will keep the country on the boil. This raises a big question. Does the highest legal institution mean that secularism means historical and cultural dementia imposed by a perpetrator through renaming of the places that results in dispossession of the places by the aborigines of those places, the people whose biographical memories as a community are registered on every element of the landscape of those places. Renaming of places by a perpetrator changes the character of that place by confining the place to the name given by the perpetrator. Such secularism does not only normalize and glorify indigenous dispossession caused by the perpetrators but also celebrates the cultural genocide that results from this dispossession and ensures erasure of historical memories that the previous names held in them.
To reclaim these memories and repossess the place Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh changed the name of Allahabad (name given by Mughal emperor Akbar) to its original name Prayagraj. The name "Prayagraj" holds the traditional ecological consciousness of Bharat in it. Prayagraj is the place where three sacred rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati meet. The place where two rivers meet is called "Prayag." Prayagraj means the king of Prayags because three rivers meet there. "Allahabad" meant merely the land populated by the blessings of Allah. If we take the Islamic perspective there is no land that is not populated by the blessings of Allah. So, the name "Allahabad" not only erases the traditional consciousness of sacred ecology and cultural consciousness associated with the name "Prayagraj", but squeezes and generalizes the place as any land populated by the blessings of "Allah." That is where cultural genocide takes over and the creation of genocidal environment is facilitated. That is what the gesture of secularism by the highest court of India does. The court forgets that even the most planned gesture like secularism or any other unplanned gesture can ignite such memories in the victims.
As the traditional and historical names of places are being restored in other parts of India and the cultural possession of the places is being retaken, in Kashmir the names given to places by the perpetrators are being encouraged and validated by the state. The status quo created by the perpetrators is being maintained by the state. Srinagar has been named as Shahr-i-Khas, a Persian word that means "the special city." This name again aims at erasing memories associated with name "Srinagar." In Kashmir the word "Srinagar" is generally translated as "the great city." This is again a memory-erosion practice. "Sri" is a name of the divine mother "Lakshmi" who bestows all prosperity on her devotees. "Srinagar" means "the city blessed with all prosperity by the divine mother "Lakshmi." This meaning stands totally erased by the word "Shahr-i-Khas."
The prominent identity markers of Srinagar city "Hari Parbat" and "Shankaracharya Hill" have suffered the same fate. The hill of "Hari Parbat" holds the temple of divine mother Sharika on it. The word " Sharika" is derived from the word " Sarika" the beautiful bird Myna (Starling), the form of which was taken by the divine mother to carry the hill on her back and then it was dropped on two demons Chand and Mund to relieve the valley of their terror. This is the legend associated with the temple. The hill is held sacred by the Kashmiri Pandit community. In 2016 J&K tourism department in one of its advertisements named Hari Parbat hill as Koh-i-Maran meaning the mountain of snakes. This name totally erases the memories associated with it. Moreover, Hari Parbat area has been a secular memoryscape for many centuries now. Memoryscape is a term coined by Sociologist Tim Edensor. He explains memoryscapes as sites which attempt to materialize memory by putting together iconographic forms. Social remembering is organized around these iconographic forms.

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In this very Hari Parbat area, very near to the hill that holds the temple on it, we have Gurudwara Chati Padshahi, a famour Sikh shrine and a Muslim Sufi shrine dedicated to Makhdoom Sahab, a Sufi mystic of Kashmir. No person from any community visiting their shrines could escape the sight of the shrines of other communities. So the Hari Parbat area, in its very essence is a secular memoryscape, with the elements of which no community had any objection. But the nomenclature Koh-i-Maran has destroyed the character of this memoryscape. This name not only humiliates this assembly of sacred iconographic structures but gives a Muslim character to the whole landscape thus erasing the name " Hari Parbat" from the social memory.
The same treatment has been meted to Shankaracharya Hill. The hill that holds the ancient temple of Jyeshtharudra Shiva, built by King Gopaditya in 371 BCE, has been named as Takht-i-Suleiman, which means the throne of Suleiman. Whatever may be the reason behind this nomenclature it certainly erases the ancientness of the temple and the memories associated with it. It is clear that the memories associated with the victims of genocide in Kashmir are being erased. This change of meaning is nothing but cultural genocide. This aims at leaving no traces of Kashmiri Pandits in the social memory of Kashmir.
The discussion of memory orientations of Kashmir will be incomplete without taking up the memoryscape of Clocktower in Lal Chowk, Srinagar. It was built by Bajaj Electricals in 1979 as a promotional structure for their company. It had a "Bajaj" logo on it. It is interesting to note that within a week of the installation of the tower, a stone was thrown on one side of it, breaking the glass and stopping the hands of the clock on that side. Perhaps, somebody did not like the structure representing an Indian company rising high above ground in Kashmir. The tower was repaired but after sometime the logo of the company was removed from it and the government took the tower under its control.
During 1990s the Clock Tower became the seat of the struggle for the control over the meaning of Kashmir. That gave rise to change of many contexts and many memories are associated with those contexts. Once a Pakistani flag was hoisted on it. Then a bunker of Border Security Force was lodged inside the basement of the tower.

In 2009 Central Reserve Police Force replaced the Border Security Force. On Republic Day and Independence Day every year, the Security forces unfurled the tricolour on the tower. The security forces bunker lodged in the basement of the Clock Tower was attacked many times by the terrorists. It was at this spot that that BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi along with the present Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded the Ekta Yatra in 1992. We remember the words of cultural geographer Laura Cameron, "Books contain stories but in a world of lakes and mountains there are many other possibly durable visual loci, that are capable of holding, reinforcing and retaining stories." We see a very durable visual locus in the clock tower. It holds and reinforces many stories.

The state power in Kashmir has mediated the selection of memories to renovate the Clock Tower under the Smart City Project and turned the tower into orchestrated memory scape. This orchestration has reinforced some tragic meanings. The iconographic form mounted at the top of the tower emphasizes a particular identity and all other identities that constituted Kashmir have been thrown into insignificance. In an interview with Newsclick on 6 April, 2023, a sensitive and thinking architect of Kashmir Hakim Sameer Hamdani explains the transformations the memoryscape of the tower underwent under the smart city project initiated by the government. Hamdani says that the Clock Tower was an example of modern architecture and resonated with a specific architecture of a particular period. The plan to use Brangh or spire on the top of the tower does not make sense.

Hamdani further adds that the Kashmir Brangh is a very sacred form of Kashmiri architecture, especially when it comes to Islamic architecture. Using a symbol from religious architecture which people avoid using for their homes and imposing it on a secular structure or civil edifice does not seem right.

Hamdani is very right. The renovation of Clock Tower raises the Islamic iconographic structure high above the ground. The Clock Tower area is projected as a primary representation of Kashmir. This Islamic iconography leaves no space for non-Muslim representations and memories. Kashmiri Pandits have already been hounded out of Kashmir after the genocidal assault of 1990. The spire at the top of the Clock Tower puts forth a narrative that everything in Kashmir is going to happen under the shadow of Islamic icons.

Some days back mass recitation of "Hanuman Chalisa", the famous Hindu scripture was done under the Clock Tower with the Islamic icon Brangh of the top of it. The mass recitation was indeed, a big event that could never be imagined to take place in Kashmir. But doing it under the shadow of Brangh evoked the memories of the narrative or "Kashmiriyat." The Kashmiriyat narrative was based on the premise that all faiths can exist in Kashmir under the shadow of Islam. But it was under the shadow of this very Kashmiriyat that Kashmiri Pandit genocide occurred in Kashmir. A subtle script of the failed narrative of Kashmiriyat seemed to be playing during the recitation. It needs to be understood that mosques are still traumatic memoryscapes for the victim community of Kashmiri Pandits. They evoke the memory of January 19, 1990 when from all mosques of the valley announcements were made that kafirs must leave the valley.

Meanings given to places create memories and we cannot but agree that these meanings may go beyond the intended meanings that reflected the status of the structures when they were built. These names may be given by the contexts that follow the context when the structures were built and may be based on the practices and perceptions prevalent in those contexts. Struggles for the control over the meanings within any built environment give rise to such perceptions and practices. This evokes the memories of the Kashmir of 1990s. Whenever a terrorist was killed by the security forces, a signboard naming the street after the killed terrorist terming him as a martyr was immediately erected in the street. That signboard was taken down by security forces after some time. This memorialization of their man after he was killed was the attempt to take control of meaning of the street.

The meanings and perceptions about places also change with the genocidal assaults. Cities and villages are turned into traumatic memoryscapes. The village of Wandhama in Ganderbal district of Kashmir where 23 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in 1998 and the village of Nadimarg in Pulwama district of Kashmir where 24 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in 2003 are two traumatic memoryscapes in Kashmir. Individual genocidal killing may memorialize a person but massacres memorialize a place keeping the name of a place as a blot on the history of the people especially if they belong to the perpetrator community.

Such massacres divide a place into two parts. One part is that which belonged to the massacred people and the other one is where the people still live. In the villages mentioned above the people who live are from the Muslim community. In the public memory these villages are the sites of massacres of the Kashmiri Pandits. The Muslims who live in these villages can play a big role in projecting their villages as anti-genocide. They can initiate memorialization of the genocidal massacre of the Kashmiri Pandits in these villages. The houses of the victims, if they exist can be turned into memorials. This will give a big boost to the Kashmiri Muslim image and serve as an example for Muslims all over the world. It should not be forgotten that the German government on 28 May, 2021, acknowledged Harero and Nama genocide of German southwest Africa that they committed in 1904 and announced reparation worth 1.34 billion dollars to be paid to Namibia over a period of thirty years. The day before this acknowledgement that is on 27 May 2021 French President Emanuel Macron sought forgiveness from Rwandan people over the siding of the French government with the genocidal regime in Rwanda that killed 800,000 people in 1994.

Countries are acknowledging decades old genocides committed by them. They are also expressing repentance over siding with the perpetrators. Kashmiri Muslims can be the first community in the world History going for the acknowledgement of the genocide they have themselves been subjected to, made to forget their own genocide and inspired to perpetrate it on those who did not convert. They can take the initiative to memorialize the genocidal events because memorialization is the first step towards restoring the honour of the victims and if it is done by the descendants of perpetrators, it restores their dignity also and initiates the elimination of the genocidal environment.

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Museum Of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide 1992-1995: Pivotal Remembrance and Transformative Justice.

The relevance of a dedicated museum that memorializes the Kashmiri Pandits Genocide stems from its potential to illuminate a somber chapter of history that has often languished in obscurity.

Sandeep Aima

Nestled at Saliha Hadzihuseinovica Muvekita 11, first floor, Sarajevo 71000, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide bears witness to the tumultuous events that unfolded during the 1992-1995 strife in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Functioning as the vanguard of the "Culture of Remembrance" initiative, this museum symbolizes the need for commemorating the harrowing atrocities endured by the region's populace and underlines the quest for transformative justice through the prism of historical memory.

With its exhaustive repository of archival documents and a multi-disciplinary approach to research, the museum crafts a vivid picture that encapsulates the enormity and intricacies of the crimes that marred the annals of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the aforementioned period. Weaving personal narratives and historical relics together, the museum transcends its role as a mere repository of historical artifacts, serving instead as a living testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the imperatives of sustaining collective memory and ethical responsibility.

In contemplating the imperative of erecting akin museums to memorialize other communities ravaged by genocide, one cannot overlook the exigency of creating a similar edifice to commemorate the harrowing Kashmiri Pandits Genocide. Such an institution would function as an essential platform for immortalizing the poignant recollections of the calamitous events that befell the Kashmiri Pandit community. It would offer an opportunity to chronicle the experiences of the victims and offer a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political milieu that precipitated the genocide, thus fostering a nuanced public discourse and ensuring that the voices of the marginalized are heard and validated.

The relevance of a dedicated museum that memorializes the Kashmiri Pandits Genocide stems from its potential to illuminate a somber chapter of history that has often languished in obscurity. By painstakingly documenting the sequence of events leading up to the genocide and showcasing the profound impact it had on the Kashmiri Pandit populace, such a museum would serve as an emblem of homage to the lives lost and as a catalyst for fostering an inclusive narrative that acknowledges the struggles and resilience of the community.

Moreover, the museum's remit would extend beyond its role as a repository of historical artifacts, assuming the mantle of an advocacy engine that stimulates dialogue on human rights, reconciliation, and conflict prevention. By fostering a culture of empathy and conscientious engagement, the museum can galvanize a collective commitment to upholding justice and fostering an environment conducive to healing and sustainable peace.
In essence, the inauguration of a museum dedicated to the Kashmiri Pandits Genocide serves as a testament to the community's tenacity and fortitude, memorializing their history and embodying their unwavering quest for restitution and equity. The Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina offers an illuminating paradigm, inspiring us to revere historical memory, amplify the voices of the afflicted, and champion an ethos of universal justice and solidarity.

Through the prism of commemoration, we are invited to introspect on the collective memory's transformative potential, fostering a shared understanding of our past, a mindful reckoning of our present, and a resilient vision for our future—one defined by justice, equity, and human dignity. As the Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide beckons us to acknowledge the resilience of the Bosnian populace, the proposition of a museum dedicated to the Kashmiri Pandits Genocide compels us to honor the spirit of endurance and fortitude, laying the groundwork for a narrative that champions inclusivity and universal harmony.

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Loss of Memory- A poem

Nitin Dhar
Cinematographer
JIGAS Alumni

With no memory of homeland
I enquire from myself

what is it that makes me long
a place I have never lived

it's sure not the scenic beauty
not the lakes, mountains, or snow

it's no luxury no comfort
no recreational sites

it's not the shikara rides
it's not skiing in gulmarg

with no memory of homeland
how can I really long

and long so bad in exile
that it sends a shiver down the spine

I think it's like a bird longing a nest in a city
It's something in my blood

it's the craving for a memory
It's the suffocation of exile

with no memory of homeland
and having born in exile

my homecoming was snatched
I was deprived of a birthright

like a son's longing for a mother's lap
I write today in exile

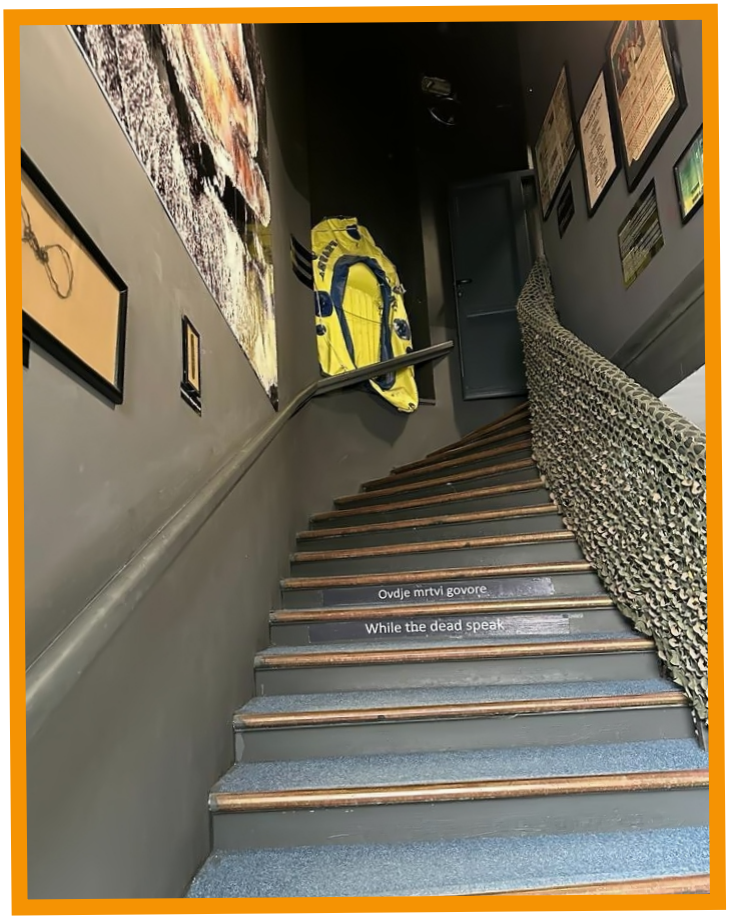
I promise myself my homeland
where I would rest this life

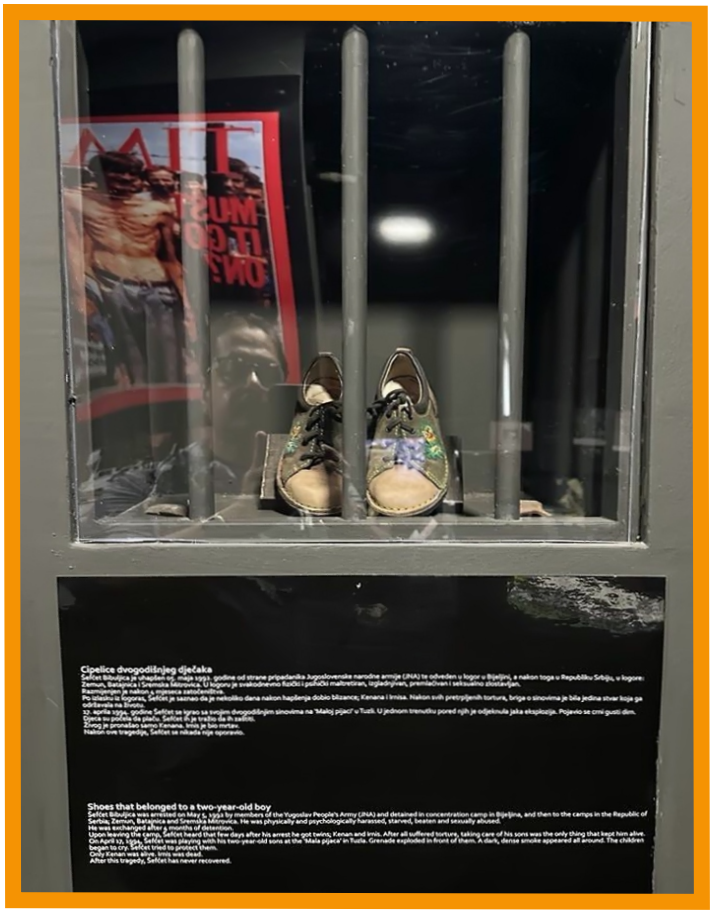
And if don't see that day this time
In homeland my next first cry.

with no memory of my homeland
I do not wish to die.

Studying Genocide is Extremely Important

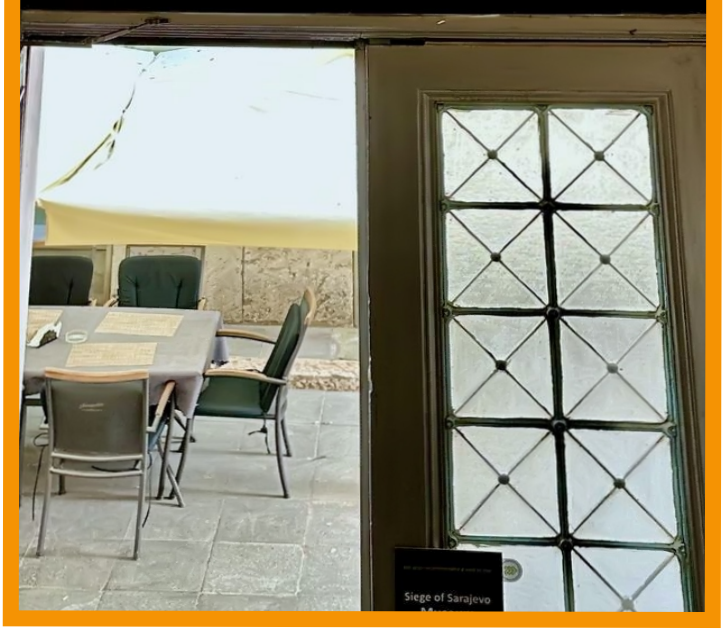
Genocide is a structural and systematic destruction of innocent people by a state bureaucratic apparatus or a similar or equivalent structure. Genocide represents a systematic effort over time to liquidate a national population, usually a minority and functions as a fundamental policy to assure conformity and participation of citizenry. The institute exists to learn in depth about Genocide in details and how individuals can recognise patterns and frame policies to prevent genocide.

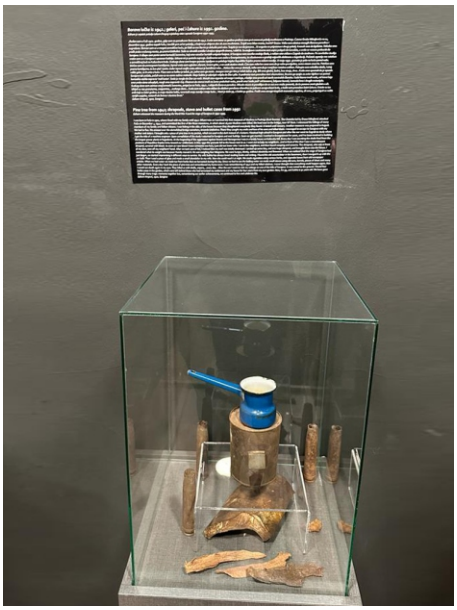


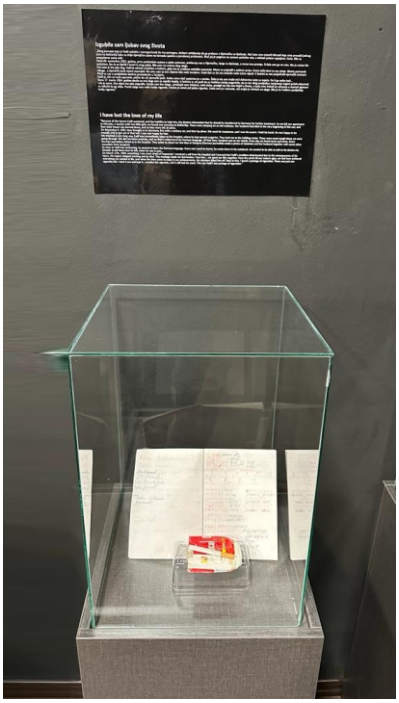


Vi sada izlazite iz Muzej zločina protiv čovječnosti i genocida 1992-1995. Hvala vam što ćete pričati o sudbinama srca koja više ne kucaju. Neka vas ta srca vode ka vremenima koja neće poznavati bol, patnju, i okrutnost jednih prema drugima.

You are now leaving the Museum of crimes against humanity and genocide 1992-1995. Thank you for 'giving life' to human hearts that no longer beats. May those hearts lead you to times without pain, suffering, and cruelty towards each other.

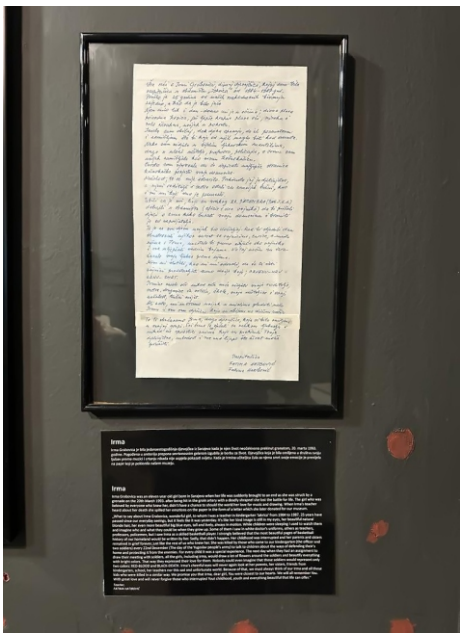


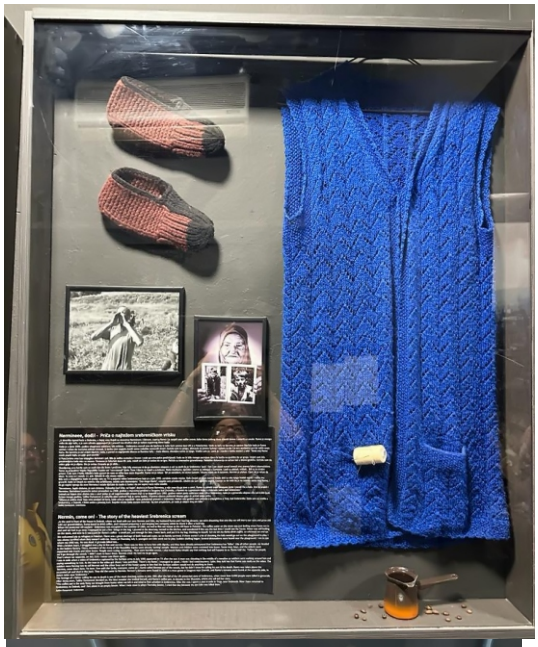


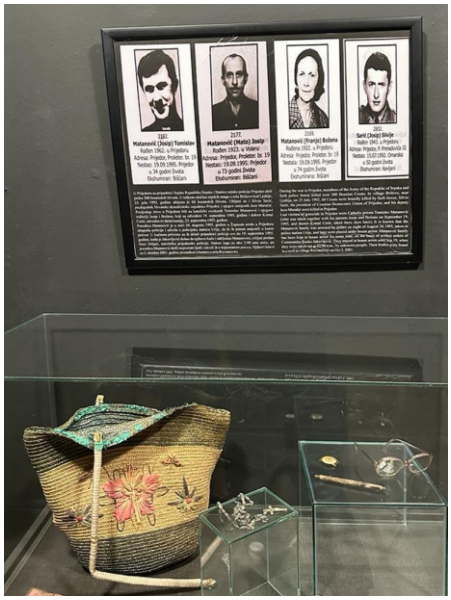


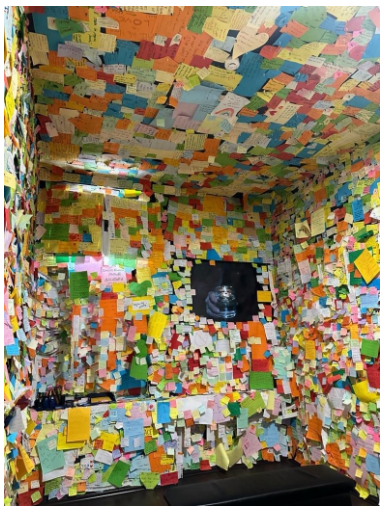
...memory remains
...memory remains

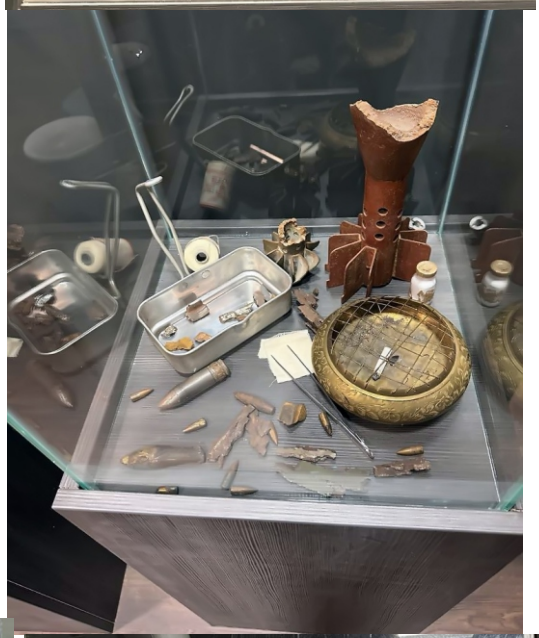
Šanse za povratak


Irma

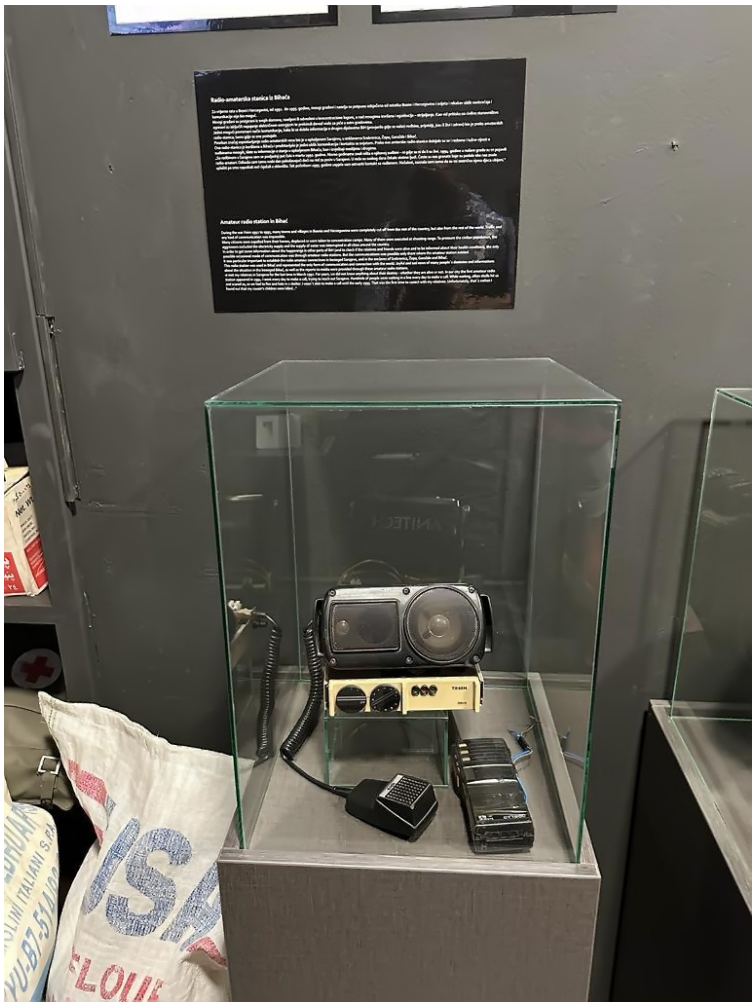


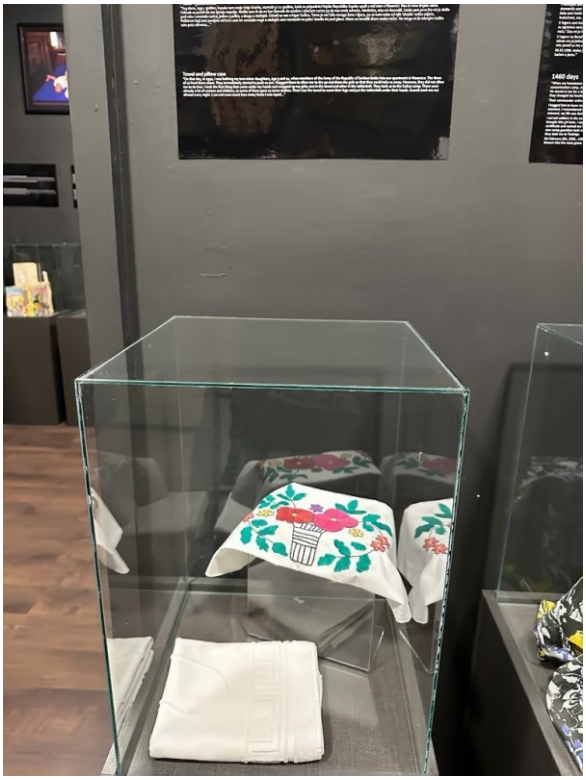


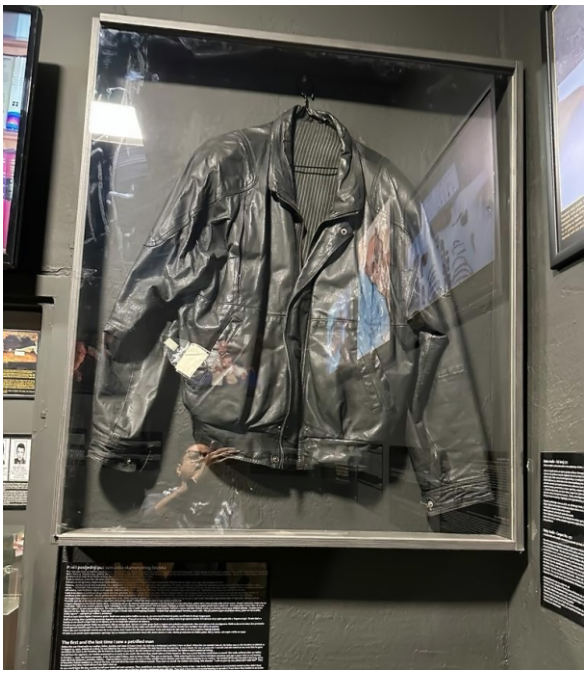




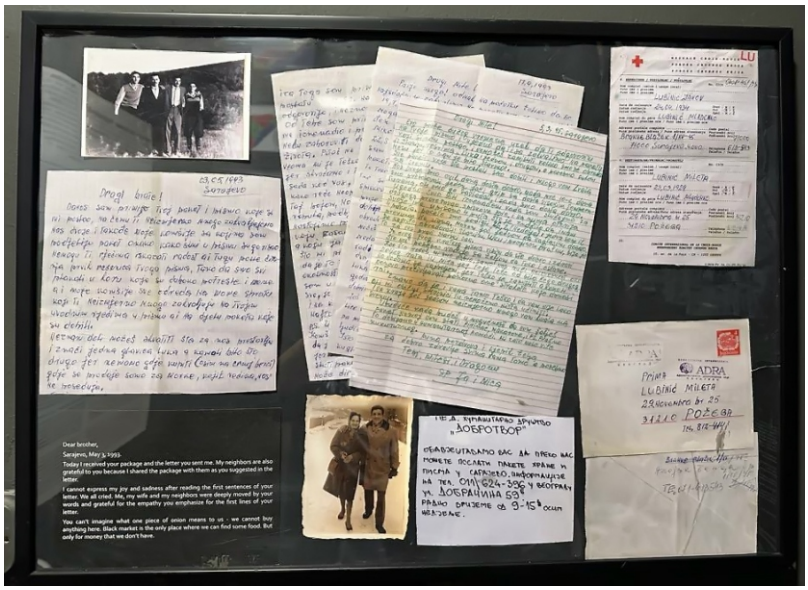
22. januar 1994. godine. U 13 sati i 40 minuta, u ulici Bosanska kod br. 4, u sarajevskom naselju Alipašino polje, šestero djece je ubijeno, a šestero ranjeno, dok su se sankali na snijegu. Masakr je izvršen sa tri granate Vojske Republike Srpske, koje su opaljene iz Nedžarića. Najmlađa žrtva, Jasmina Brković, imala je pet, a najstarija, Nermin Rizvanović, 13 godina. Onim tmh, ovog tragičnog dana, ubijeni su i Jasminina sestra Indira Brković (12), Danijel Jurenić (11), Mirza Dedović (8) i Admir Subašić (8).
22nd January 1994. At 13:40, in Bosanska 4 street, three grenades shot from occupied territory under control of Republic of Srpska army brutally killed 6 children, while 6 others were wounded while they were playing outside in the snow. The youngest one of them, Jasmina Brković was 5 at the time, while the oldest victim was Nermin Rizvanović, 13. Other victims were Indira Brković (12), Danijel Jurenić (11), Mirza Dedović (8), Admir Subašić (8).
22 Ocak 1994 tarihinde saat 13:40'da Saraybosnalıdaki Alipaşino semti C bölgesi Bosanska Caddesi Numara 4 adresinde kayak yapmaya çalışan 6 çocuk öldürüldü ve 6 çocuk da yaralandı. Çocuklar, Necarisi bölgesindeki Sırp askerlerinin attığı havan topu sonucu hayatını kaybetti. En küçüğü Brković 5 ve en büyükleri Nermin Rizvanović 13 yaşındaydı. Bunların dışında Jasmina ve kız kardeşi Indira Brković (12), Danijel Jurenić (11), Mirza Dedović (8) ve Admir Subašić (8) hayatını kaybetti.

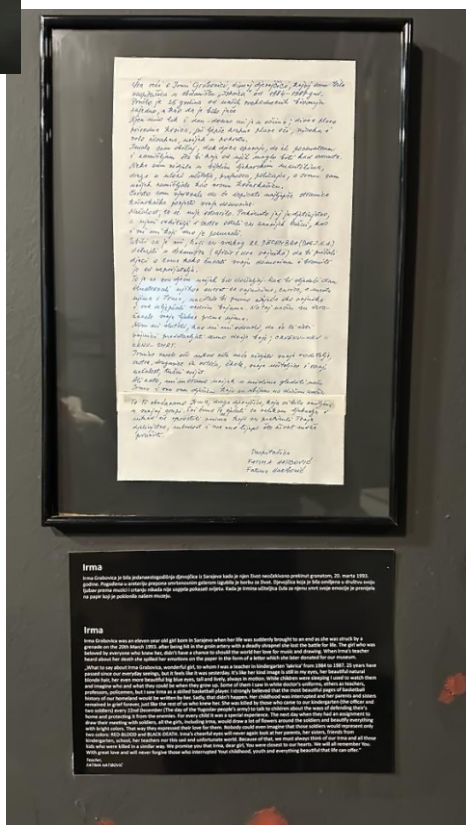

Amateur radio station in Bihać





09.07.1939.
KUPČIĆI - PROLOM
17. KRAJIŠKE BRIGADE BR. 75.


Dragi ljudi!
Dear brother,
Sarajevo, May 5, 1993.
Today I received your package and the letter you sent me. My neighbors are also grateful to you because I shared the package with them as you suggested in the letter.
I cannot express my joy and sadness after reading the first sentences of your letter. We all cried. Me, my wife and my neighbors were deeply moved by your words and grateful for the empathy you emphasize for the first lines of your letter.
You can't imagine what one piece of onion means to us - we cannot buy anything here. Black market is the only place where we can find some food. But only for money that we don't have.
ДОБРОТВОР
ADRA


Irma
Irma Grabovica was an eleven-year old girl born in Sarajevo when her life was suddenly brought to an end so vile was attack by a grenade on the 20th March 1993. after being hit in the groin artery with a deadly shrapnel she lost the battle for life. The girl who was beloved by everyone who knew her, didn't have a chance to grow up and fulfill her dreams of being her music and drawing. When Irma's teacher heard about her death she spoke to her classmates and decided to dedicate to the memory of a letter which she later donated for our museum.
„What to say about Irma Grabovica, wonderful girl, to whom I was a teacher in kindergarten 'lavica' from 1984 to 1987. 15 years have passed since our mercilessly wrongs, terrible fate took away from us and yesterday. It's like her best image is still in my eyes, her beautiful natural smile, her big blue eyes, tall and lively, always in motion. While children were sleeping I used to watch them and imagine who and what they could be when they grow up. Some of them I saw in white doctor's uniforms, others as teachers, professors, policemen, but I saw Irma as a skilled basketball player. I strongly believed that the most beautiful pages of basketball history of our homeland would be written by her. Sadly, that didn't happen. Her childhood was interrupted and her parents and sisters remained in grief forever, just like the rest of us who knew her. She was killed by those who came to our kindergarten (the officer and two soldiers) every 22nd December (The day of the Yugoslav people's army) to talk to children and bring them gifts. The next day when they fell an assignment to

Pavak

Phone:
+91-99062-87277

Website:
www.jonaraja.com

Instagram:
jigas_india

JONARAJA INSTITUTE OF GENOCIDE & ATROCITIES STUDIES
जातिरक्षानिमित्तं